

SUMMARY

Illinois Route 31 Phase I Study:
Illinois Route 176 to Illinois Route 120
McHenry County

McHenry County College Shah Center
4100 W. Shamrock Lane
McHenry, Illinois 60050
Thursday, September 22, 2011
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.



Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meeting #2

The purpose of the CAG meeting was to present a summary of CAG Meeting 1 and the project Problem Statement; introduce the project Purpose and Need; introduce the alternative development process and evaluation criteria; discuss project constraints; introduce the engineering toolbox; and conduct a workshop to identify and map key project constraints.

Invited participants included stakeholders who signed up for the CAG or who have attended CAG Meeting #1. A total of 32 volunteers were invited to this CAG meeting.

This meeting was attended by **17** invited CAG members or other interested project stakeholders; and **6** members of the project study group were present to facilitate the meeting and answer any questions (See attached sign-in sheet).

The meeting began with a PowerPoint presentation, conducted by John Clark from STV Inc. that included topics as noted below:

- **Welcome, Introductions, and Summary of CAG Meeting 1**

- Mr. Clark introduced the project team including IDOT, STV Inc., and Huff & Huff, inc. and briefly explained their role on the project.
- CAG and project team members introduced themselves – name, whom they represent (group and/or government agency), and which community they lived in.
- All members were given a copy of the meeting agenda and a handout packet including a copy of the presentation, CAG meeting 1 summary, and roadway safety improvement toolbox.
- The summary of CAG Meeting 1 was presented. Mr. Clark noted that CAG ground rules were presented and accepted by the CAG during this meeting. In addition, the CAG identified the following Key Transportation Issues and Concerns at the 1st meeting: Congestion (Existing and Future), Safety, Accessibility, and Existing Design Deficiencies.
- The Project Problem Statement developed at the 1st meeting was also reviewed:
“The transportation problems to be solved by this project are: congestion (existing and future), safety for multi-modal users, accessibility for all users, and existing design deficiencies; in addition, minimize overall environmental impacts (e.g. storm water runoff and water quality).”

- **Purpose and Need**

- What is Purpose and Need? – Required as part of EA and consists of 3 parts (Purpose, Need, and Goals and Objectives)
- Purpose and Need is developed by combining Project Problem Statement (developed by CAG during meeting 1) and Technical Analysis (conducted by engineering team). It is the foundation for the identification and evaluation of project alternatives. It combines input from the community and governmental agencies and leads to development of a preferred alternative.
- Why is the Purpose and Need important? – Required by law, sets stage for consideration of alternatives, clarifies expected project outcome, justifies project expenditure, and does not recommend specific solutions.
- The Draft Project Purpose Statement developed by the project study team was presented: “The purpose of the proposed action is to address transportation safety, capacity, access management, pedestrian and bicycle needs, and geometric deficiencies along Illinois Route 31 from the intersection of Illinois Route 176 to the intersection of Illinois Route 120, in eastern McHenry County.”
- The project problem statement was used to identify the following needs for the IL Route 31 Project: Improve Roadway Safety (IDOT top priority), Expand Roadway Capacity and Address Traffic Issues, Correct Existing Roadway Design Deficiencies, and Provide Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities.
- Discussion of each Project Need was expanded to include technical analysis results or existing condition examples
- Identified Needs: Roadway Safety – 917 Total Crashes in study area occurred between 2006-2009 with 443 Crashes occurring along roadway segments (between intersections). 54% were rear end crashes, 6 Fatalities and 54 incapacitating injuries were reported; and of the total crashes, 310 (33.8%) were injury crashes resulting in 348 injuries.
- Mr. Clark noted that intersection crashes are shown on large roll plot, taped to wall. Participants can view the roll plot for intersection crash details, and copy of exhibit would be available for download on project website. He pointed out that the highest accident intersections in the study area include the intersection of Bull Valley Road with 74 crashes and the non-signalized intersection at IL 31 / IL 120 and Millstream at the north end of the project with 77 crashes. The most common type of intersection crash was also Rear-End type collisions.
- Identified Needs: Roadway Safety – A summary of Fatal Crashes in the study area between 2006- 2009 was presented. Of the 6 Fatalities, 3 were the result of head-on collisions (the most common type of Fatal collision). IL Route 31 currently lacks a median or any barriers to prevent traffic from migrating into opposing traffic. In addition, Mr. Clark noted that all fatal crashes are located within the segment of IL Route 31 between Shady Oaks Lane to Veterans Drive. This roadway segment has the greatest number of existing geometric deficiencies within the project corridor.
- Identified Needs: Roadway Safety – Evaluation of Safety along the corridor also applies to pedestrians and bicyclists that use IL 31. Design provisions to separate ped / bike traffic from vehicular traffic and suitable crossing facilities at appropriate locations within the study area should be considered. In addition, Mr. Clark noted that the south section of IL 31, between IL Rte. 176 and Gracy Road is in the top 5% of crash locations in the state.
- Identified Needs: Traffic & Capacity – The existing roadway does not provide adequate capacity (poor LOS for existing and projected traffic volumes). For 2040 “No-Build Option”, majority of study area is LOS “E” and IL 176 to Half Mile Trail is LOS “F”. Lack of capacity

includes inadequate through lane capacity, lack of turn lanes, and inadequate existing turn lane storage. In addition, Intersections experience poor LOS and delay due to inadequate phasing / timing and inadequate through and turn lane capacity.

- Identified Need: Existing Design Deficiencies – These include but are not limited to sight distance (horizontal & vertical), roadway flooding, operational deficiencies, lack of turn lanes, inadequate turn lane storage, roadside design elements, and driveway entrances.
- Identified Need: Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations - These identified needs include provisions for safe bicycle facilities, contiguous sidewalk throughout the project corridor, pedestrian and bicycle crossing accommodations (signals) at existing and future signalized intersections and connectivity to existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the study area.
- After identified needs were presented, Mr. Clark noted that the next step is to identify project goals for each one of the identified needs. He then presented these goals on several presentation slides (see presentation included in handout materials).
- The presentation included the definition of a Strategic Regional Arterial (SRA). IL Route 31 has been identified by IDOT as an SRA. In addition; IDOT's "Complete Streets" policy was discussed (as pertaining to the inclusion of pedestrian & bicyclist accommodations).

- **Introduction to Alternatives Development Process , Evaluation Criteria, and Engineering Toolbox**

- The Alternatives Development Process was introduced. Alternatives development combines stakeholder input to date, project purpose and need, project elements, analysis of existing conditions, and technical analysis of design requirements and constraints.
- A flow chart depicting the process by which alternatives will be screened was presented. Fatal flaw analysis will be used to eliminate a large number of alternates. The remaining alternatives will be screened based on their satisfaction of the Project Purpose and Need. Lastly, the few remaining alternatives will be evaluated based on detailed evaluation criteria (e.g. ROW, Cost, and Environmental Impacts). The result of the evaluation process will be the identification of a Preferred Alternative.
- The following evaluation criteria will be used in identifying the preferred alternative for the IL Route 31: Meets Identified Needs; Environmental, Social, and Cultural Impacts; Property Impacts / Right-of-way; and Construction Costs.
- Environmental, Social, and Cultural Resource constraints were presented in more detail, including definition and importance of the resource. The following resources were discussed: Wetlands, Floodplains, Threatened and Endangered Species, Recreational Areas, Agricultural Lands, Groundwater, Special Waste Sites, Public Facilities, Historical and Archeological Properties, Air Quality, Traffic Noise, Multi-use Trails, Trees and Vegetation, and Surface Water Resources.
- The Engineering Toolbox was introduced. A brief description was provided regarding the design "tools" available to improve safety and mobility along a highway system. A detailed description of the tools, including advantages and disadvantages was provided as part of the CAG Meeting 2 handout materials.
- Pedestrian / Bicyclist Safety Improvement tools include Pedestrian Crosswalks, Sidewalks and Walkways, Pedestrian Countdown Signals, Pedestrian Pushbuttons, and Multi-use Bike Paths.
- Roadway Safety Improvement tools include Raised Medians, Two-Way Left Turn Lanes, Driveway Improvements , Access Management, Improved Sight Distance, Horizontal Curve Realignment, and Roadway Lighting.

- Intersection Safety Improvement tools include Left Turn Lanes, Traffic Signals, and Traffic Signal Modernization
- **Introduction to Workshop: Identify and Map Key Project Constraints**
 - What will be accomplished during this workshop? Identify and map key project constraints. These constraints will be used in Alternatives Development Workshop during next CAG meeting. Project Alternatives will not be discussed during this workshop.
 - Group Exercise Introduction. CAG participants were asked to go to environmental resources aerial exhibit in back of room and review identified environmental constraint areas; CAG members were asked to write down any known constraints that may have been missed by PSG on provided Post-It notes and affix directly on aerial exhibit.
 - Noted constraints compiled after conclusion of the meeting are shown in this summary document, in table below. A copy of the environmental resources aerial exhibit is available for download on project website.
- **Next Steps and Future Meetings**
 - Next Steps: Ongoing Engineering Project Development Activities and Development of complete Project Purpose and Need document per NEPA requirements. Purpose and Need document to be submitted to IDOT BDE and FHWA for review and approval. NEPA concurrence meeting planned for February 2012.
 - Future Meetings: CAG Meeting #3 tentatively scheduled for Early November 2011 and Public Meeting #2 in Late January or Early February. Exact date of CAG Meeting 3 will be emailed to CAG members and posted on website.

Comments were made and questions asked during the presentation portion of the meeting and after the presentation. Below is a summary of recorded comments and questions:

- IDOT representative commented that the Purpose and Need is currently only in outline or draft form. We are currently collecting stakeholder input so please provide any comments at today's meeting so any approved changes can be incorporated into the document. After the Draft Purpose and Need document is completed, it will go to FHWA and NEPA for formal review and they will also provide their comments.
- Question: Since accessibility, pertaining to residential and business access, was identified as a key transportation issue and concern during CAG meeting 1, shouldn't it be added to the project purpose and need? (Slides 11 and 12)

Response: Along with providing safe and suitable pedestrian / bicyclist facilities, the ability to access properties safely is a primary project goal (See Slide 21). The project study team will consider incorporating access management into the purpose and need for the project.

- Question: What do geometric deficiencies mean, as stated in the purpose statement? (Slide 11)

Response: Some existing design deficiencies are presented on Slide 19 of the presentation. Geometric deficiencies are problems with the existing roadway geometry or design (i.e. vertical and horizontal curves). There are several areas within the project area where hills and curves limit the vision of motorists along the roadway. These design or geometric

deficiencies will be addressed as part of the proposed improvements. The purpose statement will be modified to say “existing design deficiencies” instead of “geometric deficiencies.”

- Question: Only roadway segment crashes are summarized on the crash statistics slide, how about intersection crashes? (Slide 13)

Response: A summary of intersection crashes is shown on the roll plot exhibit taped to the wall. Refer to this exhibit for a summary of these types of crashes. It will be available for download on the project website. It was pointed out that the intersections with the highest number of crashes include the intersection of IL Route 31 with the following roads: Half Mile Trail, Edgewood Road, Bull Valley Road, and IL Route 20. In addition the intersection of IL Route 31 / IL Route 120 with Millstream Road was an intersection with a high amount of crashes. Also note, similarly to roadway segments, the majority of intersection crashes were rear-end type collisions.

- Question: Why were there so many rear-end collisions along IL Route 31?

Response: Rear-end crashes are the result of high traffic congestion and the lack of separate turn lanes, or inadequate existing turn lanes. One of the important goals of this project is to help reduce these and other types of crashes by improving the roadway design.

- Question: Was alcohol involved in any of the Fatal crashes?

Response: Mr. Clark stated that he believes alcohol was involved in some of the Fatal crashes.

Post Meeting: Based on review of the crash reports, alcohol was involved in 1 of the Fatal crashes.

- Question: A CAG member expressed concern with safety as a result of snow removal along the roadway and believes snow removal areas should be provided. She suggested that snow removal storage areas should be incorporated as an identified project need.

Response: This issue can be considered during alternatives development as part of the evaluation criteria. It was also noted that as part of IDOT’s complete streets policy, pedestrian accommodations are required adjacent to newly constructed roadways. Any proposed sidewalk or bike path will most likely include a buffer area that can be used for snow removal storage. In addition, many areas will also include roadside ditches that can also collect any plowed snow. If raised medians and/or roadway shoulders are constructed as part of this project, these areas can also be used for storage of snow during the winter.

- Question: Since public transportation friendly facilities and roadways that support multi-modal transportation was an important concern at CAG Meeting 1, it was requested that the Purpose and Need be modified to encourage the implementation of such facilities.

Response: The project study team will consider incorporating encourage multi-modal transportation into the purpose and need for the project.

- Question: A CAG member noted the lack of a multi-use bike path connection between the Prairie Trail west of IL Route 31 and the Moraine Hills State Park Trail east of IL Route 31.

Response: Providing Pedestrian and Bicyclist accommodations along the project limits has been identified as a project need. This includes creating a safe environment for pedestrians and bicyclist and providing safe and suitable crossing facilities at signalized intersections. The proposed accommodations will include provisions for any future connections along intersecting roadways, but the scope for this project does not include the inclusion of a continuous path between the Prairie Trail and Moraine Hills Trail. It was noted by another CAG member that a path connecting these two trails is currently being investigated by McHenry County as a part of their planning activities. During the project development phase of this project, the project team will coordinate with the County to make sure any planned accommodations along IL Route 31 do not conflict with those of the County.

- Question: Is a bypass an option for the IL Route 31 project?

Response: An IL Route 31 bypass can be considered during the alternatives development process, but will be subject to the alternatives evaluation process, including purpose and need screening and detailed evaluation criteria screening (including ROW, Cost, Environmental Impacts, etc.). (See Slides 27 and 28 of presentation.)

- Question: Is there traffic data available to show how many people are using IL Route 31 to get too the project corridor vs. to get through the corridor?

Response: IDOT maintains existing traffic (ADT) numbers for IL Route 31 and most roadways connecting to IL Route 31. These numbers are available for review on the following website: <http://www.gettingaroundillinois.com/>. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) has developed 2040 traffic projections for IL Route 31 and major connecting side streets for both with or without the planned McHenry West Bypass. The 2040 projected numbers shown on the project exhibits are based on numbers provided by CMAP that include the McHenry West Bypass.

- Question: A CAG member expressed concern with the safety of pedestrian and bicycle crossings as a part of the proposed improvement. He stated that the project team should consider tunnels or bridge crossings.

Response: Providing Pedestrian and Bicyclist accommodations along the project limits has been identified as a project need. This includes creating a safe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists and providing safe and suitable crossing facilities at signalized intersections. The inclusion of bridge or tunnel crossings can be considered as part of the alternatives development process but costs for construction and maintenance, ROW requirements, and local cost participation need to be evaluated.

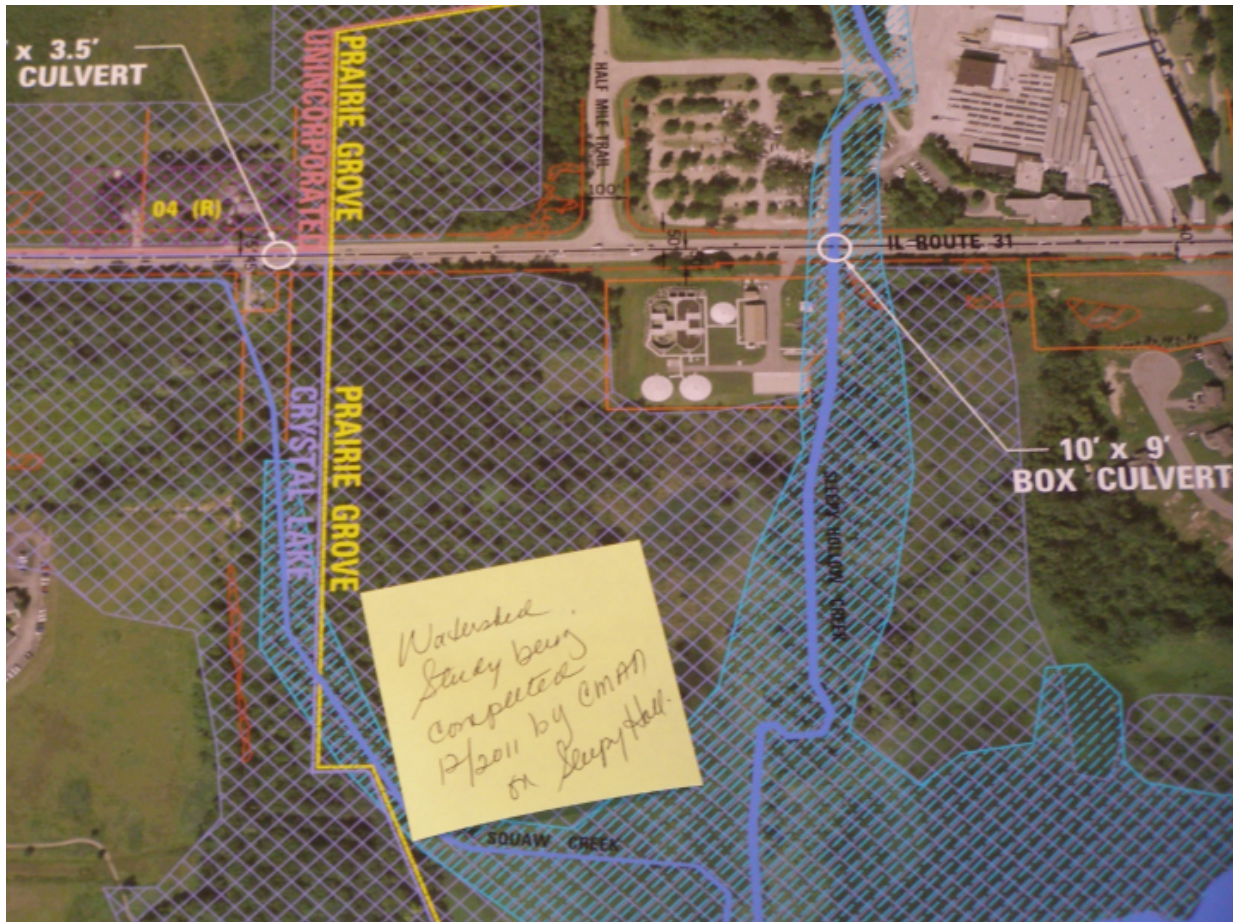
- Question: After the presentation portion of the meeting was complete, a CAG member had a comment regarding the project purpose and need. She expressed her concern that the project purpose statement did not mention the need to maintain full access to existing businesses along the IL Route 31 right-of-way, which she feels should be part of the project purpose and need.

Response: Property access will be considered during the alternatives development process. The project study team will consider incorporating access management into the purpose and need for the project.

Workshop: Identify and Map Key Project Constraints

After the presentation, CAG participants were asked to go to environmental resources aerial exhibit in back of room and review identified environmental constraint areas; CAG members were asked to write down any known constraints that may have been missed by PSG on provided Post-It notes and affix directly on aerial exhibit.

Attached to this summary document are pictures showing the written comments posted on the aerial exhibit roll plot. *(See next page for start of pictures.)* A blank copy of the entire exhibit is available for download on the project website.



Picture 1

Comment: Watershed Study being completed 12/2011 by CMAN on Sleepy Hollow Creek



Picture 2

Comment 1: Major Water Recharge Area, Sod Farm

Comment 2: Bike / Pedestrian Bridge (per Village of Prairie Grove Town Center Concept Plan)



Picture3

Comment: Future Signal Anticipated at Veterans Parkway and IL Route 31, when warrants are met



Picture 4

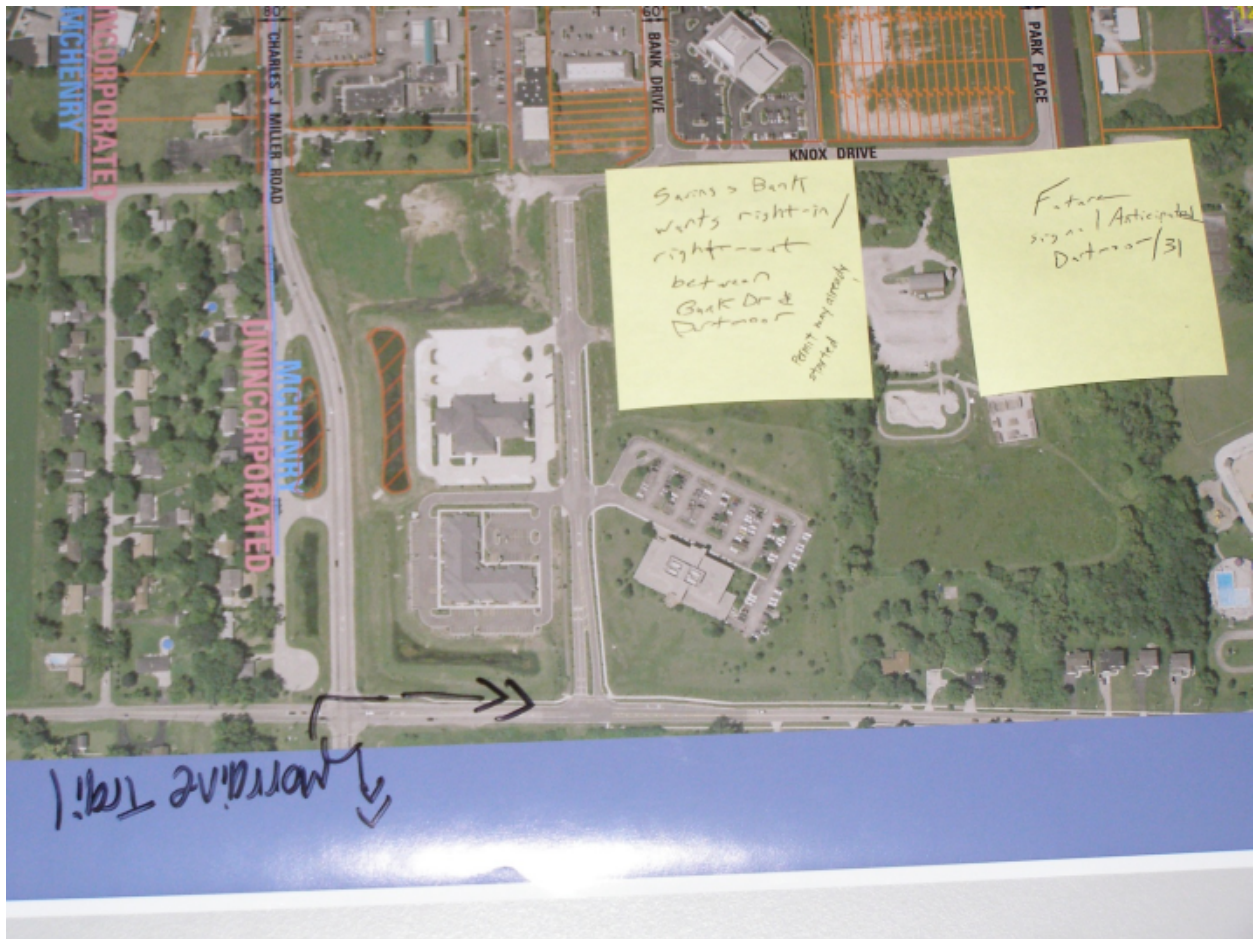
Comment: ROW for Shamrock to Mercy Connection



Picture 5

Comment 1: Savings Bank wants right-in / right-out between Bank Drive and Dartmoor, permit may already started

Comment 2: Future signal anticipated at Dartmoor and IL Route 31



Picture 6

Comment: Existing Moraine Hills Trail Connection



Picture 7

Comment 1: Plans to connect Dartmoor to Ridgeview

Comment 2: Existing Prairie Trail location



Picture 8

Comment: Major Drainage Issues

CAG Meeting #2 completed at approximately 3:00 p.m.

The next steps for the study will include the continuation of ongoing engineering project development activities (e.g. Traffic Analysis / Projections, Crash Analysis, and Environmental Surveys) and the development of the project purpose and need document per NEPA requirements. The next CAG meeting is tentatively scheduled for early November. When an exact date is established, CAG members will be contacted via email and the project website will also be updated. At this meeting the following activities are tentatively planned: present complete draft purpose and need document and begin preliminary alternatives development.

Attendance Roster – CAG Members

Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meeting #2

Illinois Route 31 Phase I Study - IL Route 176 to
IL Route 120, McHenry County

McHenry County College Shah Center
4100 W. Shamrock Lane
McHenry, Illinois 60050
Thursday, September 22, 2011
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.



	NAME	Community	Email Address	Present (Please Initial)
1	Douglas Martin	McHenry	dmartin@ci.mchenry.il.us	<i>DM</i>
2	George Mann	McHenry		
3	Rosemary Swierk	Prairie Grove	rosemary@directsteel.com	<i>RAS</i>
4	Eric Witowski	Crystal Lake	ewitowski@yahoo.com	
5	Terry Feddersen	Crystal Lake	Sellcommercial@yahoo.com	
6	Vicky Smith	At Large	vsmith@mchenry.edu	✓
7	Jim Hicks	Crystal Lake	ujhicks@juno.com	<i>JH</i>
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Attendance Roster – CAG Members

Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meeting #1

Illinois Route 31 Phase I Study - IL Route 176 to
IL Route 120, McHenry County

McHenry County College Shah Center
4100 W. Shamrock Lane
McHenry, Illinois 60050
Thursday, September 1, 2011
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.



	NAME	Community	Email Address	Present (Please Initial)
31	Steven Schilke	IDOT	Steven.Schilke@illinois.gov	✓
32	Scott Czaplicki	IDOT	Scott.Czaplicki@illinois.gov	SDC
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34	John Clark	STV inc.	John.Clark@stvinc.com	JAC
35	Sanjay Joshi	STV inc.	Sanjay.Joshi@stvinc.com	SKJ
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